**New Hampshire**

The territory that afterward became New Hampshire was included in a grant of land in 1622 by the Council for New England to Sir Ferdinando Gorges and John Mason, both of whom had been interested in New England affairs from the beginning. The grant extended from the Merrimac River to the Kennebec. The first settlement was made in 1623 by a Scotchman named Thomson, at the mouth of the Piscataqua River, and was called Little Harbor. A few years later Edward Hilton, a London fish merchant, founded Dover six miles up the river. He was soon joined by his brother William and several families, and later by others from Massachusetts.

A company called the Laconia Company was formed in England in 1629, and the next year it sent a vessel to the mouth of the Piscataqua, bearing a colony of settlers with Captain Neal as governor. Portsmouth, first called Strawberry Bank, was settled, and Governor Neal spent several years exploring the forest. He brought back a discouraging report to his company, and the settlement was left to shift for itself.

In 1638 a settlement was made at Exeter between the Piscataqua and Merrimac rivers by John Wheelwright, the brother-in-law of Mrs. Hutchinson, who had been banished from Massachusetts.

These little towns had come into existence, each independent of the others. None of them had a stable government, and there was constant discord and turbulence. In 1639 the towns formed an agreement to unite, but as Massachusetts claimed this territory, the towns at length agreed to come under her jurisdiction. The union was formed in 1641, the people of the settlements retaining liberty to manage their "town affairs," and each town was permitted to send a deputy to the General Court at Boston.

New Hampshire continued a part of Massachusetts until 1679, when the king separated them. He joined them again in 1686; but they were finally separated in 1691, and New Hampshire again became a royal province, the president and council being appointed by the Crown and the assembly elected by the people. Until 1741, however, the governor was but a lieutenant under the supervision of the governor of Massachusetts.

New Hampshire grew very slowly for many years. The chief cause of this was the fact that the heirs of Mason claimed the right to the land, and their infinite disputes and litigations with the settlers concerning the land titles repelled home-seekers. At last, after a hundred years of controversy, the Mason heirs were satisfied (1749) by the purchase of their claims.

In 1719 a colony of Scotch-[Irish](http://www.IrishHistory.info/) immigrants settled in New Hampshire and founded the town of Londonderry, so named from the city in Ireland from which they came. These people were thrifty, and they soon began an industry which they had learned in Ireland -- the raising of flax and manufacturing of linen goods. The goods made by means of the old spinning-wheel in these humble cabins in the forests became famous over all [New England](http://www.NewEnglandHistory.info/), and even in the mother country.